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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250
December 19, 2005

MICHAEL D. BOPP, STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL
JOYCE A. RECHTSCHAFFEN, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR AND COUNSEL

Dale Sopper
Chief Financial Officer
Social Security Administration
6401 Security Boulevard
Altmeyer Building, Room 800
Baltimore, MD 21235

Dear Mr. Sopper:

We are writing in regard to SSA's compliance with the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (IPIA). According to your agency's recent PAR, SSA's FY 2005 report includes results for FY 2004-not FY 2005- due to "timing of the payment accuracy analysis." We are concerned that even 3 years after enactment of IPIA (and four years after OMB circular A-11), improper payment information is still not being reported in a timely manner. As part of our oversight of the effectiveness and efficiency of Federal financial management, our Subcommittee needs to have the best data available so that we know what work on improper payments remains to be done. However, estimates are only the first step. The ultimate goal is to eliminate improper payments in federal agencies and illustrate impeccable stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

In order to work with your agency in achieving full compliance with IPIA, we ask that you provide detailed answers to the following questions:

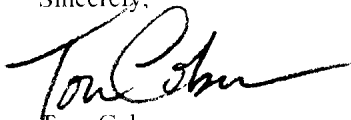
- 1) What obstacles have prevented your agency from providing estimates of improper payments in fiscal years 2002 through 2005?
- 2) When will you have estimates of improper payments available?
- 3) What steps are you taking, even in the absence of estimates, to reduce the risk of improper payments at your agency?

Please provide and return the requested information to

Liz Scranton, Chief Clerk
Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, and International Security
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
439 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Please contact Robin Landauer with Senator Coburn's staff at 202.224.2254 or John Kilvington with Senator Carper's staff at 202-224-7061 with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Tom Coburn
Chairman
Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management,
Government Information, and International Security



Tom Carper
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management,
Government Information, and International Security